

UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

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Wednesday, February 26, 2025

Lost Funding - Part 2



In an earlier post, we provided some numbers on the proposed NIH cuts to UC.* Further background on the NIH cuts (the 15% cap on overhead) can be found in [The Atlantic](#):

On the afternoon of Friday, February 7, as staff members were getting ready to leave the headquarters of the National Institutes of Health, just

outside Washington, D.C., officials in the Office of Extramural Research received an unexpected memo. It came from the Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees the NIH, and arrived with clear instructions: Post this announcement on your website immediately.

The memo announced a new policy that, for many universities and other institutions, would hamstring scientific research. It said that the NIH planned to cap so-called indirect costs funded by grants—overhead that covers the day-to-day administrative and logistical duties of research. Some NIH-grant recipients had negotiated rates as high as 75 percent; going forward, the memo said, they would now be limited to just 15 percent. And this new cap would apply even to grants that had already been awarded...

Over the next several days, the memo sparked confusion and chaos at the NIH, and across American universities and hospitals, as researchers tried to reckon with the likely upshot—that many of them would have to shut down their laboratories or fire administrative staff. A federal judge has since temporarily blocked the cap on indirect costs...

Typically, a memo communicating a major decision related to grants would take months or years to put together, sometimes with public input, and released six months to a year before being implemented... Substantial changes are generally vetted through HHS leadership, and NIH officials have always "very much abided by the directives of the department," the former official said. But in the past, drafting those sorts of directives has been collaborative...

But [Stefanie] Spear [HHS principal deputy chief of staff] and Heather Flick Melanson, the HHS chief of staff, insisted that the memo was to go live that evening. Officials immediately began to scramble to post the notice on the agency's grants website, but they quickly hit some technical snares. Fifteen minutes passed, then 15 more. The two HHS officials began to badger NIH staff, contacting them as often as every five minutes, demanding an explanation for why the memo was still offline. The notice went live just before 5:45 p.m., and finally, the phone calls from HHS stopped. Almost immediately, the academic world erupted in panic and rage...

Full story at <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2025/02/nih-indirect-cost-memo-hhs/681736/>.

From the [San Francisco Chronicle](#):

...U.S. District Judge Angel Kelley blocked the proposed NIH cuts Friday until she can rule on an injunction, which would be a more permanent decision. Several organizations plus 22 states

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— including California — sued to block the cuts from taking effect, saying they would cause “irreparable harm.”

But the judicial hold can’t contain the chaos that the potential cut has wrought, said Gina Banks Daly, the director of federal relations at UC Berkeley. “NIH funding at this moment, even with the temporary restraining order, is essentially frozen…”

Full story at <https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/joegarofoli/article/uc-berkeley-lab-federal-cuts-20175918.php>.

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*<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/02/lost-funding.html>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:30 AM](#) No comments: 

Labels: [health care](#), [politics](#), [UC](#), [UC-Berkeley](#)

San Diego Freeze



IT'S NOT JUST THE FROST THAT BITES

UC-San Diego is anticipating the effect of the upcoming state budget on UC and the NIH cuts. From the [San Diego Union-Tribune](#):

UC San Diego... is placing a freeze on the hiring of new faculty to help cope with cuts that could cost it more than \$200 million in state and especially federal funding.

The move was confirmed Thursday by Terry Gaasterland, a computational biologist who also chairs the Academic Senate's Committee on Planning and Budget, which collaborates with UCSD executives on money issues.

She said the campus anticipates losing as much as \$55 million in the new state budget. That's what Gov. Gavin Newsom proposed cutting, part of an effort to slash funding to the entire University of California system by almost \$400 million.

UCSD also projects that it could lose at least \$150 million in annual funding from the National Institutes of Health, which has been told by the Trump administration to reduce its budget by billions of dollars.* The estimate was confirmed in a statement the school placed on its website Thursday.

The faculty hiring freeze involves the entire university, including the school of medicine...

Full story at <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/2025/02/20/uc-san-diego-bracing-for-more-than-200m-in-funding-cuts-freezes-faculty-hiring/>.

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*Note: This is a larger estimate than we reported earlier. It may involve anticipated loss of grants as well as the cut in overhead costs to 15%.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:20 AM](#) No comments: 

Labels: [health care](#), [UC-San Diego](#)

Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Is this really the hill UC wants to die on?

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The idea of a hill to die on is apparently a military expression meaning something that has to be defended regardless of cost. It's actually not a very good expression. One is reminded of the opening scene in the movie "Patton" in which General Patton says the object of war is not to die for your country but to make your opponents die for their country. In any case, the news coming out of Washington, DC is currently offering UC whole mountain ranges of alternative hills to die on.

Yours truly came across this story of a particular hill on which UC may not wish to die:

The father of a Palo Alto teen who garnered national attention for getting rejected by 16 colleges and hired by Google as a software engineer has filed a new lawsuit on Feb. 11 against the University of California and five UC campuses -- UC Berkeley, UCLA, UCSD, UCSB and UC Davis -- as well as the U.S. Department of Education, for racial discrimination. "What we're trying to get out of this is a fair treatment for future Asian applicants going forward, including my other kids and my future grandkids," says Nan Zhong.

His now 19-year-old son, Stanley Zhong, is a co-plaintiff, along with their group called SWORD, Students Who Oppose Racial Discrimination, comprised of other students and families who feel Asian Americans are often discriminated against in the college admissions process. Stanley Zhong had a 4.42 GPA from Gunn High School and 1590 out of 1600 on the SATs. He also founded his own document-signing startup and tutored underserved kids in coding. His college rejections and his employment offer from Google became a lightning rod in the national debate over the college admissions process...

Full story at <https://abc7news.com/post/palo-alto-teen-rejected-16-colleges-hired-google-files-racial-discrimination-lawsuit-university-california/1593493/>.

Video at <https://ia600105.us.archive.org/29/items/newsom-1-2-25-new-laws/UC%20sued%20over%20admission%20discrimination%20against%20Asians%202-20-2025.mp4>.

As blog readers will know, Harvard and the University of North Carolina lost an admissions case before the US Supreme Court on the issue of anti-Asian discrimination. UC, of course, can say that because California has the anti-affirmative action Prop 209 on the books, it can't possibly be doing what Harvard and UNC were doing. But there is also on the record the fact that UC and the UC Regents campaigned to repeal Prop 209 in 2020, and were defeated in part by opposition from the Asian community:

Video: https://ia601700.us.archive.org/25/items/prop-16-ad-opposing/Fighting%20Against%20Prop%2016%2C%20She%20Feels%20like%20%E2%80%9CWonder%20Woman%E2%80%9D%20_%20NO%20on%20Prop%2016.mp4.

Beyond that bit of history is the fact that the decision by the Regents to drop any consideration of SAT/ACT scores was made despite an Academic Senate recommendation to the contrary. So, as a result, Mr. Zhong's 1590 score wasn't considered.

In short, maybe the wise thing for UC to do is to reach some kind of settlement with Mr. Zhong. A lawsuit will open the door to discovery of internal documentation about the UC admissions process. Maybe the SAT/ACT issue needs some reexamination.* Maybe it's not necessary to die on this particular hill, given the plethora of other hills now available. Just a thought...

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*For a more recent review of this issue, see <https://www.nber.org/papers/w33389>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:30 AM](#) No comments:     

Labels: [admissions](#), [diversity](#), [politics](#), [UC](#), [UC Regents](#)

Coming Not-So-Soon to an NIH Grant Near You



From [Inside Higher Ed](#):

A federal judge Friday extended a temporary block on the National Institutes of Health's plan to slash funding for universities' indirect research costs amid a legal battle over the policy change.

The nationwide block, which U.S. District Judge Angel Kelley put in place Feb. 10 soon after a coalition of state attorneys general, research advocates and individual universities

sued the agency, was set to expire Monday. But it will now remain in place until Kelley has time to consider the arguments the plaintiffs and NIH presented at a hearing Friday morning.

It's unclear when Kelley will rule. But after the two-hour hearing, she said she certainly "has a lot of work to do" before making a decision...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/science-research-policy/2025/02/21/judge-extends-block-controversial-nih-cuts>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:20 AM](#) No comments:     

Labels: [health care](#), [politics](#)

Monday, February 24, 2025

TPM - Part 2 (Senate didn't know)



According to an article in the [Daily Bruin](#), student government leaders were told about planned changes in Time-Place-Manner rules that were originally put in place in September:

UCLA is once again set to revise its Time, Place and Manner policies... The university previously released TPM policies in September that restrict public expression activities to select parts of campus, including Bruin Plaza, Meyerhoff Park and Dickson Court South...

Amplified sound will generally be allowed during marches that are constantly moving... Most stationary protests will still require a permit...

"The UCLA Time, Place, and Manner (TPM) working group has been reviewing public feedback on the interim policies, with a key concern being that designated areas for public expression are too restrictive," [Administrative Vice Chancellor Michael] Beck said [last] Wednesday in a written statement to the Daily Bruin. "In response, the group is considering expanding more areas of campus while also assessing other aspects of the policies."

Beck added in the statement that the policies are expected to be released in March and will undergo a 60-day review period similar to the one undergone by the revised policies released in September.

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- Contributors
- California Policy Issues
 - Toby Higbie
 - UCLA Faculty Association

Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2025/02/19/ucla-set-to-revise-time-place-and-manner-policies-expand-public-expression-areas>.

It is unclear who was consulted about the proposed changes in TPM rules and why the Senate should be unaware of them while student government is informed. The article above quotes the chair of the campus Academic Senate as being unaware of the proposal. There is also the issue of how the changes link, or don't link, to the litigation and temporary restraining order of last fall. Also unclear is what kind of enforcement, as a practical matter, is envisioned. At least two demonstrations that appear to be in violation of the current rules have occurred. What enforcement process is envisioned for the revised rules?

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments: 

Labels: UCLA

More Reasons to Avoid Wilshire If You Come to UCLA From the Westside at Night



LADWP Waterline Installation for New Westwood/VA Hospital Station on City Streets

Summary

Metro subway construction contractors will continue to install a new waterline at the Westwood/VA Hospital Station for use during construction and future use as a water service line for the VA Station. Initial activities began in the fall of 2023, and construction is beginning in City right-of-way areas between Barry Av and San Vicente Bl/Federal Av on Wilshire Bl. Some anticipated noise is associated with the work from saw-cutting, trenching and plating the street, jackhammering, and other equipment that will be used. The work to install the new waterline pipes will continue for about one year.



Multiple traffic controls will be implemented during the work. Lane reductions will be required throughout the construction zone along Wilshire Blvd between Barry Ave and Federal Ave/San Vicente Blvd. The traffic control plans will minimize traffic congestion and impact local communities.

The team continues working on Stage 77 for work from 9pm to 6am, Monday to Sunday. There will be multiple restrictions on Wilshire Bl. Please follow the signs.

Stage 7: The work is anticipated to start on February 18, 2025, for the week, from 9 pm to 6 am. The work will take place on southbound Federal Av near Wilshire Bl. Southbound traffic will be reduced to one lane on San Vicente Bl. from Goshen Av.

Notices will be posted and updated online as dates and traffic control stages are confirmed. All driveways will be maintained open unless previously notified. Street parking may be impacted. Please follow the posted traffic signage and street parking restrictions. Please refer to the detour signs for impacted routes and relocated bus stops.

Dates: Through November 2025

Work Hours: Work hours vary depending on the traffic control stage.

Monday through Sunday, 9 pm to 6 am, and Nighttime.

*Hours may vary depending on the traffic control stage.

Wilshire Bl

- Multiple Wilshire Bl lanes will be reduced for eastbound traffic from Westgate Av past San Vicente Av/Federal Av. Some restrictions on westbound traffic along Wilshire Bl beginning east of Federal Av/San Vicente Bl will be necessary.
- Bus stops will be relocated along Wilshire Bl between Federal Av and Stoner Av/Barrington Av for eastbound and westbound traffic.
- Parking will be restricted on the south side of Wilshire Bl between Westgate Av and Federal Av.
- When work is located near Barry Av, northbound access to Wilshire Bl from Barry Av will be closed, and a detour will be implemented.
- Traffic detours will be implemented throughout the work. Please follow all detour signs.
- The northern sidewalk on Wilshire Bl between San Vicente Bl and Barry Bl will be restricted. During this closure, the bus stop on this corner will be closed and relocated.

Federal Av/San Vicente Bl

- Left and right turn pocket restrictions will be implemented at Wilshire Bl and San Vicente Bl.
- Northbound Federal Avenue restrictions will be implemented from Texas Avenue to Wilshire Boulevard. During the work, right and left-hand turns will also be restricted. Please use the detour signs.

- Parking will be restricted on the eastern side of Federal Av from Wilshire Bl to Texas Bl and on San Vicente Bl from Wilshire Bl to Goshen Bl. Traffic will be detoured.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:20 AM](#) No comments:     

Labels: [traffic](#), [UCLA](#)

Sunday, February 23, 2025

Messages

From an email received Friday afternoon:

Dear Bruin Community:

I wanted to check in with you and share a video message [below], as well as the message below that UC President Michael Drake sent last night regarding recent federal policy actions. The UC's Federal Updates web page continues to be updated, so I hope you will visit it often for weekly briefs and new information.*

*<https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/federal-updates>.

To help our community understand the possible impact of new policy changes, I have asked our Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Darnell Hunt and senior leaders from research, student affairs, academic personnel, inclusive excellence and other key areas to hold a campuswide Town Hall next week to share the latest updates and answer your questions. You will receive more information about this in the coming days.

Let's stay informed. Let's stay connected. And let's remember: We are One UCLA.

Sincerely,

Julio Frenk

Chancellor

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Message from University of California President Michael V. Drake

On Friday, February 14, the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights distributed broadly a "Dear Colleague" letter regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs.**

**<https://www.ed.gov/media/document/dear-colleague-letter-sffa-v-harvard-109506.pdf>.

The letter provided guidance on the Education Department's interpretation of existing anti-discrimination laws and indicates how the Office of Civil Rights may assess compliance with certain legal requirements. UC leadership across the system is working with members of our community to evaluate the potential impact and implications of the letter and will provide updates or guidance as appropriate. As many in our community are aware, the University of California has been operating under longstanding state law requirements and does not consider race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in our practices.

The University of California's mission is built on teaching, research, healthcare, and public service for the benefit of all Californians. To meet our ambitious goals, we provide opportunities for students, faculty, and staff from all backgrounds to study, teach, conduct research, work, provide quality patient care, and thrive at UC. Different perspectives and experiences enrich and improve our academic, research, and service outcomes.

Our mission and values have not changed. We encourage UC staff to continue with their work in alignment with all applicable state and federal laws. We will continue to ensure that every Californian has the opportunity to join the UC community and feels welcome at our campuses.



We are committed to ensuring that our campuses benefit from the talents and aspirations of all, as we create a vibrant workforce for future generations.

Sincerely,

Michael V. Drake, M.D.

UC President

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Or direct to <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/EeEqyn9M-s8>.

Meanwhile, back at the court: [From [Inside Higher Ed](#)]

As mass layoffs and suspended grant reviews at National Institutes of Health sow more chaos for the nation’s once-cherished scientific enterprise, a federal judge [heard] arguments Friday morning on whether to extend a temporary block on the NIH’s attempt to unilaterally cut more than \$4 billion for the indirect costs of conducting federally funded research at universities, such as hazardous waste disposal, laboratory space and patient safety.

If the cuts move forward, they will “destroy budgets nationwide,” higher education associations and Democratic attorneys general, along with medical colleges and universities, argued in court filings this week. “But the consequences—imminent, certain, and irreparable—extend far beyond money, including lost human capital, shuttering of research projects and entire facilities, stalling or ending clinical trials, and forgoing advances in medical research, all while ending the Nation’s science leadership.”

The NIH refuted that claim in court filings, arguing that the plaintiffs “do not establish that any irreparable impacts would occur before this case can proceed to the merits.”

Friday’s hearing comes two weeks after the NIH’s Feb. 7 announcement that it will cap indirect research cost rates at 15 percent, which is down from an average rate of 28 percent, though some colleges have negotiated reimbursement rates as high as 69 percent...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/science-research-policy/2025/02/21/nih-faces-pivotal-hearing-amid-layoffs-grant>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:08 AM No comments:    

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